

The SWORD of the LORD

Edited by JOHN R. RICE.

"And they cried, The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." Judges 7:20

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An Independent Christian Weekly, Standing for the Verbal Inspiration of the Bible, the Deity of Christ, His Blood Atonement, Salvation by Faith, New Testament Soul Winning and the Premillennial Return of Christ. Opposes Modernism, Worldliness and Formalism.

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BROKEN VOWS or, Back to Bethel

By

Dr. Sam Morris

P. O. Box 6628, San Antonio, Texas

(Sermon preached at Sword of the Lord Conference on Revival and Soul Winning, Lake Louise, Toccoa, Georgia in July, 1956. Mechanically recorded for THE SWORD OF THE LORD.)

"And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there [notice the words dwell there]: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother. Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: And let us arise and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem. [He dug a grave in his back yard; a mighty good thing to do.] And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob. So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Beth-el, he and all the people that were with him. And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother."—Gen. 35:1-7.

Backsliding is a Bible doctrine. I did not say falling from grace is a Bible doctrine, for once a person is saved, he is eternally and everlastingly saved and can never be snatched out of the hands of Almighty God. We get salvation from God through Jesus Christ as a free gift. Ephesians 2:8-10 says, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any many should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

People sometimes say to me, "If I believed once saved, always saved, I would sin all I want to." Well, ladies and gentlemen, the new birth takes care of the "want-to." If you want to sin, that is not a contradiction of the message of eternal salvation; it

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Dr. Sam Morris

What Will Happen in 1959?



A radio message by Dr. John R. Rice

We have walked into the portals of a new year, or will do so right away. What will happen as we face the new year? Everybody is interested in that. There are some things we know; some things we do not know, but it is good to remind you of some things that are certain about 1959.

The text is in Luke, chapter 17, verses 26—30:

"And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

I do not believe this text is usually interpreted as God intended. Some try to use this as the sign when Jesus is coming. They try to use this to give some evidence that the end of this age is upon us. They say that there was a wickedness in the days of Noah that has not been repeated until modern times, and that the wickedness, as in the days of Noah, is a sign that Jesus

must come soon. That is not what the Scripture says. In fact, it says the exact opposite.

1. Life Will Go on as Usual, With No Warning of Disaster or Christ's Coming

This Scripture says that in the days of Noah life went on as usual. They married; they gave in

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The Last Sermon of the Year

By Charles H. Spurgeon

"Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward."—Luke 16:2.

The first part of this text applies to us all; the second part will apply to each one of us before long.

"Give an account of thy stewardship," is a command that may be addressed to the ungodly. They are accountable to God for all that they have, or ever have had, or ever shall have. The law of the Lord is not relaxed because they have sinned; they still remain responsible to God, even though they attempt to cast off the yoke of the Almighty. As creatures formed by the divine hand and sustained by divine power, they are bound to serve God; and, if they do not and will not, His claims upon them do not cease, and to each of them He saith, "Give an account of thy stewardship."

This text may also be applied to the children of God, to the godly, in a different sense, however, and after another fashion. For, first of all, the godly are God's children; they are accounted as standing in Christ. They are no longer merely God's subjects; for what they owed to God as sinners has all been discharged by Jesus Christ their Substitute and Saviour. They have, therefore, been placed on a different footing from other men; but, having been saved by grace and adopted into God's family, they have had entrusted to them talents which they are to use to His honour and glory. Being the Lord's children, and being

saved, they become His servants, and as His servants they are under responsibility to God, and they will all have to give to Him an account of their stewardship.

Look at Eli; I have no doubt that he was a saved man, but God made him a steward over his own family as well as a prophet to Israel, and he had to give an account of his stewardship, and because he had not been faithful in it, although he was not condemned eternally, yet he was made most miserably to suffer when he was told that the whole of his house should be swept away, and also when he heard of the deaths of his sons, and as the direct news of all learned that the ark of God was taken by the Philistines. God visited him in his capacity of steward, made him give in his account, and awarded him in this life a heavy penalty for his unfaithfulness.

And I do not doubt that many a child of God, who has been saved at the last, yet, being found unfaithful as a steward, has had to suffer much, has lost much of honour and much of fellowship with God, and much of high advancement in the way of grace which he might otherwise have obtained.

David also was another such a steward. He was not a lost soul. I have no doubt that he is among the saved and blessed saints in Heaven; but as a steward he was not found faithful. You remember how grievously he sinned, and from that moment his family was full of rebellion, his kingdom was full of trouble, and he went with

broken bones all the way down to his grave.

Hence I may say to you, children of God, who are not under the law,—and I do not address you at all in a legal strain when I so speak to you—you also have a stewardship. Give an account of it, or else perhaps you may be no longer spared; or, being spared, yet still you may have tokens of your Lord's displeasure, which you may carry with you even to your tomb. Thank God, you shall leave them there! But it would be more for God's glory and for your own comfort not to have them at all.

I desire, on this last day of another year, not so much to speak to you, as to get you to talk to yourselves. So, first, we will together think upon the reasonable demand made in our text: "Give an account of thy stewardship." Next, we will examine some reasons why we should at once give

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Charles H. Spurgeon

Free Until January 12!

Beautiful New Book, IS GOD A "DIRTY BULLY"? Free With One Yearly Subscription, \$3
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We thank God for the thousands of subscriptions that have come in in the last month. But on January 12 the offer closes. Be sure to get your subscriptions mailed and postmarked before midnight, Monday, January 12, if you want to get the big 202-page, library-bound book of sensational sermons by Editor John R. Rice, free.

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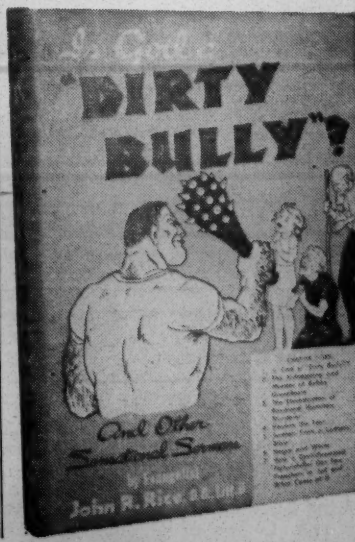
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(Continued on page 3)



Kids' CORNER

By Aunt Joy

A New Leaf

He came to my desk with quivering lip—
The lesson was done.

"Dear Teacher, I want a new leaf," he said,
"I have spoiled this one."

I took the old leaf, stained and blotted,
And gave him a new one all unspotted,
And into his sad eyes smiled,
"Do better, now, my child."

I went to the throne with a quivering soul—
The old year was done.

"Dear Father, hast Thou a new leaf for me?
I have spoiled this one."

We took the old leaf, stained and blotted,
And gave me a new one all unspotted,
And into my sad heart smiled,
"Do better, now, my child."

—Kathleen Wheeler

Dear Nieces and Nephews:

Are you glad that it will soon be a new year? To me, there is something wonderful about starting a year all over. Just like the little boy in the poem who had messed up his paper, sometimes I do things wrong and displease the Lord and feel sad because I have messed up a page on my life. So I am glad that soon we will begin a new year, 1959. God gives us a clean new year to start out with. We can confess our sins, and then look forward to a good year and trust the Lord to help us do better.

So New Years is a time for making resolutions. A resolution is a decision, usually a strong decision to do better about something, to make a change about something. Some people make resolutions and then when they slip up and don't keep them, they decide that resolutions are useless. But if we think carefully and pray about what decisions we ought to make, the Lord will help us each day to keep them.

So it is important to look over the last year and see what you need to improve on. Is there something that you would like to be different about this year?

What Resolutions Should You Make?

The very first resolution that a young person must make is to take Jesus Christ as Saviour. It would be very silly to try to change your life unless Jesus Christ is in your heart to help you. We could try and try to do better, but unless we have been

saved and have Jesus Christ in our hearts, we just can't be good.

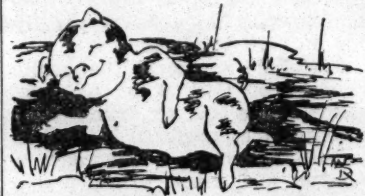
I heard a story about a lady who went to a farm and saw a pig wallowing around in a mud hole. The pig was dirty and smelly. "Well," said the lady, "I believe I'll give this pig a bath. When he is clean, he would be a nice pet." So the lady scrubbed the pig until he was pink and shining. Then she powdered him and put perfume on him and tied a blue ribbon



around his neck. My, that was the cleanest and sweetest-smelling pig you've ever seen!

But later that day, the lady looked out the window and—you can guess what she saw—the pig was back in the mud hole, grunting and rolling around in the dirt.

You see, the pig was still a pig. Even though the lady gave him a bath and made him look nice, the pig still loved to roll in the dirt. Pigs just naturally like



to roll in the mud and they don't mind the smell at all!

Just so, a boy or girl might decide that he was going to be good and act like a Christian. But until a person asks Jesus Christ to save him and change his heart and forgive his sins, then he just can't be good. Unless you are saved, you still love your sin like a pig loves to wallow.

So if you have never asked Jesus to be your Saviour and depended on Him to forgive of your sins, won't you do it now? 1959 will be the happiest year you have ever had if you will turn to the Lord Jesus who loves you so much. He died on the cross to pay for your sins. Romans 10:19 says,

THE EDITOR'S Notes

by John R. Rice

We start with the first week in January a new series of Bible crossword puzzles prepared by Mrs. Libby Handford on "Great Chapters of the Bible." With much work, prayer, research, and study, these Bible crossword puzzles have been prepared. We believe they are the best we have published and that through them, thousands of people will learn more about the Bible than they ever knew before, and learn it in a happy and interesting way.

Again, in 1959, we will give the clothbound Scofield Reference Bible, Number 80, with large type and all the Scofield helps except the concordance, free to those who complete forty-eight of the 1959 puzzles on time and correctly in this year, and keep the coupons we give for correct solutions and send them in together at the close of the year.

And each week there will be an interesting pamphlet or book which we think you will find wonderfully rewarding.

We beg you, start in time, try to get every Bible crossword puzzle this year in the department of the "Sword Wit Sharpeners."

Not a Pamphlet, Not Paper-Bound, the Beautiful Volume Given Free With Subscriptions

It is hard for readers to believe that the book, *Is God a "Dirty Bully"?* and *Other Sensational Sermons*, which we are offering absolutely free with subscriptions (with one subscription for \$3.00, or with three subscriptions for \$7.00, or with ten subscriptions for \$19.00, in the U. S. A.) is an expensively bound library volume. But it is. There are 202 pages. The cover is not a paper cover. Printed on fine book paper, in good type, size 5 5/8 X 8 inches, nearly one inch thick, the book is bound in simulated cloth over board covers. The binding is better than most cloth binding in that it is beautifully printed in two colors and can be cleaned with a damp cloth and stays permanently bright and attractive.

We hope you do not miss the opportunity of getting this big book free. You can buy it for \$2.50, but would you not rather have it free with subscriptions?

6 Days at Winnipeg

It was a great joy to spend December 3-8 with the Alliance

"Whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

If you are not yet a Christian, then why don't you make this resolution: "Here and now I decide to take Jesus Christ as my Saviour. I say yes to Him in my heart and depend on Him to save me, as He promised to do." That is the most important decision you can ever make, and the most wonderful way to begin the new year. (Remember that the decision to trust Christ as Saviour is a once-for-all decision. When you trust Jesus, you are saved forever.) If you make this decision, won't you write me and tell me about it?

Once that matter has been settled, what other resolutions should we make this year?

Many of us ought to make new resolutions about helping at home, and being quick to obey parents. Maybe some of you girls would like to resolve to set the table every day without being told, or to wash the dishes without complaining. Some of you boys might resolve to shovel the snow without being asked or to burn the garbage.

One resolution I want to make this year is to be more kind and to watch my words. The Bible commands us: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:31, 32). Some of those words are big ones, but the whole point of those two verses is that we should not be

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INCIDENTS and Illustrations

By Evangelist Robert L. Sumner
Contributing Editor

The Army Chemical Corp. tells of a poison gas, a deadly nerve gas developed for war-time use by the Germans. If the victim can be given a small injection of atropine in the few minutes before death enters after exposure, the life could probably be spared.

In other words, salvation would come *only* if the individual acted in time! This same principle is also true relative to the deadly "nerve gas" of sin. The one known remedy to offset its destructive power—the blood of the Lamb of God—was shed at Calvary. If the sinner acts in time, deliverance is his; if he does not, damnation is inevitable. How very strange, then, that sinners smitten with this deadly poison deliberately ignore the remedy! John 3:36 expresses it, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." How much better to read of those who, in conflict with "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan," victoriously "overcame him by the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 12:9, 11).

"I WOULD RATHER LOSE IN A CAUSE THAT SOME DAY WILL TRIUMPH THAN TO TRIUMPH IN A CAUSE THAT I KNOW SOME DAY WILL FAIL."—Woodrow Wilson

Tabernacle, Rev. E. S. McVety, pastor, and other brethren. It was also a joy to speak to the annual Christmas rally of Youth for Christ in the civic auditorium, with over 2,000 present; at the Mennonite Brethren College; at Winnipeg Bible Institute; to the Evangelical Ministers Association; and to a meeting of the Protestant League in Grant Memorial Church.

Radio Broadcast on Some 19 Stations Begins in January. Pray!

God has led us to begin a weekly half-hour radio broadcast on about nineteen stations in January, and we will try to get in a radio log of the stations and hours of broadcasts in this paper.

This broadcast should cost us over \$40,000 a year, or perhaps \$4,000 a month. It is a step of faith. In every area, a few good Christians who are burdened about getting out the Gospel could guarantee the actual broadcasting expense of "The Voice of Revival," speaker, Evangelist John R. Rice, with the Voice of Revival Choir, and do great good. We beg you to pray, and if you can, to give regularly to this gospel cause.

Wonderful Blessings Ahead for SWORD Readers

We are now examining the flood of evangelistic sermons which came in our annual sermon contest, which closed December 1. Awards totaling some \$1,600 will be given for the ten prize winners. Others which are counted good enough for use in THE SWORD OF THE LORD will be purchased. So in 1959 THE SWORD OF THE LORD will again publish the greatest evangelistic sermons published in this generation, as we have done in the past!

We hope to have an extended period of revival through THE SWORD OF THE LORD, with definite plans for soul winning and for making soul winners. We have a wonderful series of articles for young people in mind, which are already at hand. We expect THE SWORD OF THE LORD to carry regularly answers to Bible questions, reports on revivals, as well as the regular feature, "Incidents and Illustrations" for preachers and teachers, as given by Contributing Editor Evangelist Robert L. Sumner. Bible crossword puzzles for the year are planned, and we expect to spend \$15,000 for the

But What Do We Risk and Suffer for Souls?

Newspapers made much of the fact last month that three California mountain climbers had scaled the 3,604 foot perpendicular face of El Capitan in Yosemite Park. The three, who thereby became the first to ever climb the granite monolith from that direction, spent more than a year preparing for their project and actual climbing time saw the elapse of nearly thirteen days. Most of the time they did not climb after dark, but on the final night they braved below-freezing temperatures and frost to inch their way up the last 175 feet to the top of the 7,649 foot high skyscraper. They accomplished, breathless readers were told, something no other known mortal had done.

By risking their three necks and spending thirteen days in climbing—at any moment of which a misstep or a miscalculation would have spelled death—the three reached the top.

However, the report rebuked my heart tremendously. These three were willing to take such tremendous chances and risk the loss of everything, even life itself, to accomplish something that had never been done before. Yet what little effort we expend, and at what little sacrifice to ourselves, to win a soul, worth more than the world itself, to the Saviour. How we need to get busy about our Master's business since "the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4).

REMINDER TO AMERICA: "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted" (Isa. 60:12).

God Help the Episcopalians!

An Episcopal minister from (Continued on page 3)

puzzles, the plates, the salaries, the books and Bibles given to bless those who rejoice in this very popular feature. We intend to faithfully defend the faith and maintain the doctrinal position which has been stated on the front page of every issue of THE SWORD OF THE LORD for twenty-four years. We expect to publish three full-length sermons and Bible studies each week by the greatest preachers living and dead.

Great things are planned for the year ahead. Be sure to renew your subscription now and do not miss them.

North Carolina, Here We Come!

We trust many will come to the big Sword of the Lord conferences in North Carolina the following dates.

January 11-14, at Winston-Salem, sponsored by Salem Baptist Church, Piedmont Bible College, Urban Street Baptist Church, and Faith Baptist Tabernacle. Services Sunday afternoon and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday mornings and evenings at the Salem Baptist Church auditorium.

January 13-16, Tuesday through Friday, at Durham, North Carolina, at a large auditorium to be announced. Sponsored by more than a dozen pastors and churches.

January 15-18, at Wilson, North Carolina, in the Legion Hall, sponsored by many local pastors and churches.

Weekday services beginning 9:30 in the morning, 6:45 each evening.

Speakers will include Dr. Tom Malone, Pontiac, Michigan; Dr. Bob Jones, Sr.; Dr. Bill Rice, evangelist, Murfreesboro, Tennessee; Evangelist Walter Handford; and Evangelist John R. Rice.

Luncheon will be served to ministers and Christian workers on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday at Winston-Salem. Free rooms are available for out-of-town pastors and wives in Winston-Salem. Write Rev. G. Elmo Renegar, Pastor, Urban Street Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, for free rooms for ministers in the homes of people.

Wonderful music is planned. The fellowship will be tremendous. Hundreds of preachers, Christian workers, and lay Christians should by all means attend one or more of these great conferences in North Carolina. Only two weeks away. Make plans now!



AMERICA'S OUTSTANDING REVIVAL WEEKLY

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New Radio Broadcast Started

By Evangelist Walt Handford, Assistant Editor

Last night I saw a radio broadcast born!

I suppose there is nothing particularly spectacular about twenty people assembled in a very plain recording studio as we recorded a tape for the first half-hour broadcast. There was no great revival crowd to inspire us. But the program itself was so thrilling that one of the basses in the choir sang "Give Me a Passion for Souls" with tears in his eyes. Another choir member, a college senior, felt he would have to study his class assignments during the preaching portion. But the message was so interesting that he listened attentively and forgot his study.

To me the recording session was an exciting two hours, since I expect the broadcast to grow into an important world-wide ministry very soon.

The new program is entitled, "The Voice of Revival," a half-hour broadcast featuring Dr. John R. Rice with an aggressive, powerful revival message each week. The five Rice girls who live in Wheaton all have a part, together with a revival choir organized especially for the broadcast. Grace Rice MacMullen plans and directs the music, and tremendous, heart-moving, revival music it is.

"The Voice of Revival" will be aired each Sunday, beginning January 4, 1959, over nineteen stations in many sections of the country. A radio log of stations and times appears below.

There are a number of reasons why many of us believe Dr. Rice should be on the radio in addition to his many other duties. He is

a profound yet simple Bible teacher. In my opinion, no other living man has the mastery of the English Bible as does Dr. Rice. But his message doesn't run simply to some unimportant technical details of Scripture. Rather Dr. Rice's message is always basic and intensely practical.

Then Dr. Rice has a pungent, listenable style ideally suited to radio. His voice is excellent and his delivery is powerful and convincing. Dr. Rice is no newcomer to radio. He started back in the days of the crystal set and earphones. For years he had a daily radio broadcast in Dallas, Texas. More recently he has made two or three 15-minute broadcast tapes a week for use on Station WMUU at Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina, and other stations. The new broadcast will require very little more of Dr. Rice's time than did the other broadcasts he was already doing.

The need in America for such a broadcast is tremendous. Our nation is on the brink of moral and spiritual disaster. Nothing but a Heaven-sent revival can save us from ruin. Our churches need reviving and Christians need to be stirred to win souls as never before. Dr. Rice, with his long years of experience in city-wide revival work, his touch with the common people, and his Spirit-filled preaching, is needed today to help bring this desperately-needed revival. By means of radio this message can be sent to vast areas quickly. Radio is a great deal more personal than simply a printed sermon. Many people will listen

Zinzendorf testified that he owed much of his religious fervor to the casual sight of a picture of the crucifixion with the simple inscription at the bottom: "All this for thee; how much for me?" —Selected.

to the broadcast who would not take time to sit down and read a Bible message. Although there are many other good broadcasts, no other broadcast is doing quite what we believe our nation needs in a fervent appeal for revival.

A Venture of Faith

This whole radio ministry is a big step of faith for us. We will be signing contracts obligating ourselves for over \$40,000 for radio-station time alone this coming year. We don't have a single penny on hand to start such a project. My heart was in my mouth the other day when I considered the tremendous financial responsibility involved in this new venture.

Experienced radio people tell us that it will be at least a year before we can hope to get enough in gifts each week from the listeners to pay for the radio time. This means that we need the help of thousands of friends who read THE SWORD and are "sold" on the need in America for Dr. Rice's important ministry. We will need over \$900 a week at least to get this program launched.

Can we count on you to help us regularly with your gifts? We are doing all we can, but will need your earnest support. I believe this weekly radio program is the greatest single advance in the ministry of Dr. Rice and THE SWORD OF THE LORD in recent years. Will you join hands with us to make it a success?

Here is a coupon I want you to sign and return to us if you feel led of the Lord to have a part in this new radio broadcast, "The Voice of Revival." Dr. Rice will be encouraged to know of your interest in this new venture of faith. We will send you a pack of calendar envelopes to help you give regularly.

Radio Partner Coupon

Dr. John R. Rice
Box 420
Wheaton, Illinois

Dear Dr. Rice:

I want to be a partner with you in your new broadcast, "The Voice of Revival." I will pray regularly that God will use it.

1. I enclose \$_____ now to help in the radio expense.

2. As God enables me, I will send \$_____ per month to help.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

State	Town	Station	Frequency	Time (each Sunday)
Calif.	Los Angeles	to be announced
Colo.	Denver	KLIR	990 KC	7:30 am MST
Ga.	Toccoa	WLET	1420 KC	8:00 am EST
Kan.	Newton	KJRG (FM)		9:30 pm CST
Mich.	Detroit	CKLW	800 KC	2:30 pm EST
"	Grand Rapids	WFUR	1570 KC	9:30 am EST
"	Muskegon	WMUS	1090 KC	2:30 pm EST
Mo.	Springfield	KWTO	560 KC	2:00 pm CST
Nebr.	Columbus	KJSK	900 KC	to be announced
Okla.	Tulsa	KVOO	1170 KC	"
Pa.	Montrose	WPFL	1250 KC	1:30 pm EST
So. Car.	Greenville	WMUU	1260 KC	4:30 pm EST
Tenn.	Chattanooga	WAPQ	1150 KC	7:00 pm EST
Texas	Dallas	WFAA	820 KC	to be announced
"	Longview	KLTI	1280 KC	8:00 am CST
Wash.	Seattle	KGDN	630 KC	7:30 am PST

Kids Korner

(Continued from page 2)

angry and talk mean to others. Even if someone does something wrong to us or doesn't talk nice to us, we are to be kind and forgiving. Why? ... Because God has forgiven us of our sins for Jesus' sake.

Another resolution some of you might make is to read the Bible every day. You who have joined the Sword-Bearers Club have already done that, and I hope many others will decide to do that and join the club. If you will take time each day to read at least a chapter, and pray, asking forgiveness for your sins and help for the day, I know that will help you grow into a strong Christian, and will also help you keep the other resolutions you make! If you will honestly resolve to read a chapter in the Bible and pray each day, then make that pledge, sign your name and address, enclose 25c for the beautiful gold sword membership pin, and mail to Aunt Joy, Kids Korner, Box 420, Wheaton, Illinois.

Be sure to take time to think and pray about what resolutions YOU ought to make this year. Maybe you would like to make

some of the resolutions listed below. I have left space at the bottom for you to add some resolutions of your own. Then you can

cut out the list, sign your name and the date, and hang the list in your room as a reminder of the resolutions you have made.

MY RESOLUTIONS FOR 1959

☐ 1. If I have never trusted Christ before, I here and now take Him as my Saviour.

or

☐ 2. I am already a Christian, but I want to give myself to the Lord again, and will try to put Him first in my life this year.

☐ 3. I will try to be more help at home. I will be obedient to my parents and do my work cheerfully.

☐ 4. I will try to be kind and thoughtful. I will forgive those who are not nice to me, by God's help.

☐ 5. I will set out to read at least one chapter in the Bible each day. I will take time to pray each day.

OTHER RESOLUTIONS

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Free Until January 12!

(Continued from page 1)

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And the Gospel must be spread by those who believe the Gospel. Only by the sacrificial and loving

Incidents and Illustrations

(Continued from page 2)

Mount Dora, Florida, recently addressed the National Licensed Beverage Association's convention at Atlantic City, New Jersey. As unbelievable as it might seem, this sad specimen of the ministry, Rev. John F. Mangrum, told the tavern boys they were victims of "Puritanism" which had lowered them to "second class citizens" in the mind of the public. The Associated Press quoted him—a preacher, not a bartender—as saying, "Quit being ashamed and embarrassed by your business. Don't hide behind the scorn of the professional drys. You have let them shrink you into a gigantic inferiority complex again and again." His suggestion for the bottle boys: go join the church!

I fully realize that the irresponsible statement of one man who is derelict in his duty should not bring reproach on an entire denomination and perhaps some will write me indignant letters for titling this incident, "God Help the Episcopalians!" However, before you bother to buy a four cent stamp, let me remind you that this man was only speaking in the language approved by his denomination at their annual convention held earlier this year in southern Florida. At that time they went on record as officially favoring alcohol in moderation.

Yes, God help the Episcopalians!

* * *

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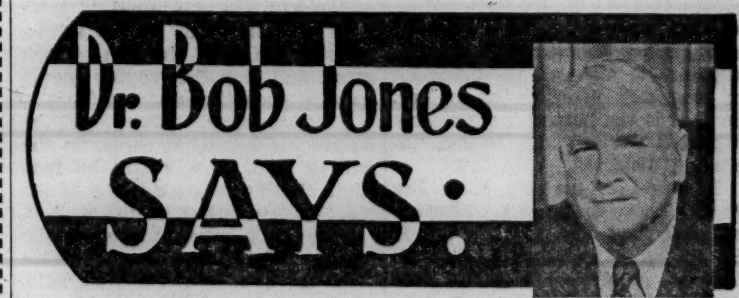
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers.

—Selected

and prayerful giving and going of God's people can the Gospel be spread. Will you send THE SWORD OF THE LORD to people who need it?

Some of us here at the Sword of the Lord office with love and prayer and sacrifice are doing all we can to get out the Gospel, to stir revival fires, to defend the faith. Whatever reproach there is in being a Bible-believing fundamentalist, standing up for the great fundamentals of the Christian faith, pressing for scriptural evangelism, with love for all and without compromise, we gladly bear. Those who are for this plain stand ought to show it by faithfully helping now. We beg you, send your own renewal subscription and send subscriptions for others.

Address THE SWORD OF THE LORD, Box 420, Wheaton, Illinois. OFFER CLOSES MIDNIGHT, JANUARY 12! HURRY!



We have just received a letter with a check from a Christian businessman who is a former student of Bob Jones University. I quote from this letter. "Dr. Bob, I appreciate Bob Jones University's stand in the face of the onrushing flood of satanic influence. Let me encourage you by saying there are hundreds of Christian businessmen across America who are behind you and your stand for truth. I know this personally, because of my national contacts in the circle in which I have been privileged to move for the past four years. I find that the sincere, Christian, thinking businessmen today real-

ize the dangers we are facing." We believe that God called Bob Jones University into existence to do a special job that needs to be done today. Please pray for us; and if you have any of the Lord's money you would like to invest in the type work Bob Jones University is doing, we will promise you we will use the money carefully and prayerfully so that it will do the most good possible to the most people possible. Thank you, and God bless you.

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New Year Wishes

What shall I wish thee, dear friend,
As you enter another year?
A life all free from sorrow,
With never a pain or fear?

A path all strewn with roses
With never a prickly thorn
With all of joy to gladden
And naught to make thee mourn?

Nay, then thou'lt lose the blessing
That comes with sorrow's hour,
Thou then wouldst lose the comfort
Of Christ's own mighty power.

Oft in the deepest trial
The richest blessings come,
And pain but leads us upward
Toward our heavenly home.

So I will leave thy future
In His all-loving hand,

With Him will leave the mysteries
We cannot understand.

Content that He will lead thee
The way that's always right,
The roughest path but brings thee
To His own glory light.

I know that He will give thee
His own deep joy and rest,
I know that He will send thee
All that is wise and best.

So I will only wish thee
Just His own perfect will,
His own great love and blessing
Thine inmost soul to fill.

Yet "more and more" of glory
Until the goal is won,
And in His Royal Presence
Eternity's begun.

—E. M. U.

What Will Happen in 1959?

(Continued from page 1)

marriage. That is not wrong. And they didn't know about the flood until it came suddenly. Instead of these things being a sign so we can know when Jesus will come, the plain opposite is taught, that when Jesus comes nobody is going to know. It will be the ordinary, routine course of life, day by day the same.

Now will you notice, then, that according to the pattern here, when Jesus comes it will be as it was in the days of Noah. They ate, they drank, they married, they gave in marriage and they didn't know, they had no warning about a great flood that would come suddenly and destroy them. I think Noah had told them about a flood, but he didn't know when it would come, and they didn't know when it would come. So when Jesus comes, some will be called out to meet God unexpectedly and suddenly.

The same thing was true, we are told, about Sodom and Gomorrah:

"Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

Notice again that Lot found down in Sodom that people carried on the same routine standards. They went on with their everyday business. They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded. Is there anything wrong with planting crops, and building houses, and buying, and selling, and having regular meals, and sleeping in beds? No! No! But this is the ordinary natural course of life which people take, ignoring the threat of death, ignoring the possible coming of Jesus, as it was in the days of Noah and as it was in the days of Lot. I say in 1959, then, Jesus may come. But if He comes He will find people eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, planting and building, buying and selling—going on in everyday life just as before. So that is the pattern here clearly expected for all the future, including 1959.

So now let me say this: We do not know that Jesus will come in 1959, but He may do so. If He comes, it will be unexpected. If Jesus comes in 1959, that will be blessed, but it will be a surprise, because "in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." No one knows the day or the hour, so the Scripture has plainly said.

2. In 1959 No Atomic Explosion Will Wipe Out This World; No Change in Human Civilization.

Let us notice further. In 1959 then, life on the human plane will go on the same, and will until the end. Mankind is not going to be wiped out by great atomic explosions and the nuclear war. I am so tired of all these people thinking the Bible is now out of

date and thinking now everything has gone to pot, so there is no use of making plans for the future. God has His hand on this universe. "Man proposes, but God disposes."

The people who built the Tower of Babel to reach to Heaven and thought they could thwart God and not have any more destruction by floods and such matters—how foolish they were! God has ways to put to nought the machinations of men and plans of men.

But this year you say, "Don't you suppose that now the whole world will fall to pieces?" No, I do not. People will go on buying and selling, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, planting and building as they did in the days of Noah, and as they did in the days of Lot. The plan is the same. Mankind is no different.

Somebody asks, "Brother Rice, isn't it getting hard to have revivals?" No, it has always been hard to have revivals.

You say, "Brother Rice, there are some people these days who won't listen." But in all ages there have been people who wouldn't listen.

But you say, "Some people who claim to be Christians these days show no evidence of regeneration." Yes, that is the way it was when Judas joined the party of Jesus too, and was one of the apostles. That is the way it was in the days of the apostles when Paul said to the elders of Ephesus in Acts, chapter 20, "Of your own selves, some of you preachers will lead away sheep from the flock and come as wolves to the fold." You see, it always has been true. The ordinary course of events will continue in 1959.

I had a letter the other day from a young woman, thirty-one, who said, "I want to ask you a question. I have met a young man whom I love; yet I wonder, with the world sitting on a powder keg, should people marry and have children?" She continued, "I have such a horror of being left a widow with little children to look after, and fear the trouble people have in such times of war."

I wrote back, "There will be no trouble but what comes in the will of God. It will still be true that all things work together for good to them that love God."

You don't have to see all the future. The future is left with God. As someone has well said, "I do not know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future." Thank God, He is going to look after His own.

3. God's Promises, God's Program, God's Power Are Unchanged in 1959

That means that in the future everything that God has ever said is still true. All the promises are still "yea and amen." God still answers prayer. Your labor is not in vain in the Lord. If you sow, you will reap. Don't be weary in well doing because you may be startled or discouraged by some events that are reported in the newspapers. The truth is, God has His

hand on the world. And while men go on in sin and the world has little room for God, God still allows people to go only so far.

Life will go on the same. The human race will not be blotted out by a nuclear war. There may be war—there has been before. There may be poverty and depression—there have been before. Some people die—they do every year, every week, every month, every day. And disaster and trouble and accidents will come to some—it always has been so; but life will go on the same. People will eat and drink, marry and give in marriage. People will plant and build as they have before. And so we can expect this course of affairs to go on.

But thank God, the Gospel is the same. It is still true that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13). It is still true that "whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (John 15:16). It is still true that as you sow, you will reap. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Ps. 126:6). It is still true we have the command to take the Gospel to every creature—not only in the foreign fields, but to every creature in your community, in your home, your family, in your area, and then, of course, to the uttermost parts of the world. But the Great Commission still exists. And with it is still the same promise of Jesus, "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). Thank God for that!

Now there are some things that are certain for 1959. One thing is that God will still be responsible for His Word. God will still be in charge of things. Thank God, for Christians there need be no fret, but a glad facing of the future.

If you are right with God, if you put your trust in Him, if your soul has been saved, if your sins have been forgiven, you need have no fears about the future. You can say, as did Jesus, "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or,

Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek" (Matt. 6:31, 32). That is, heathen people worry about the future, but Christians need not do so. In 1959 God will care for His own. That is one thing certain. In 1959 God will still be concerned to save sinners, and "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).

In 1959 God still wants us to carry the Gospel to sinners everywhere.

4. Death Will Come for Some in 1959

Well, first of all, you may die. People who seem sound and well now will soon die. Somebody now in the very bloom of health will be cut down in a sudden accident, or heart failure, or a stroke. A little brain capillary will break, a little blood vessel will break in a certain part of the area, the brain will have pressure, and there will be paralysis, then perhaps death to somebody who hears me today.

Somebody will drive out in this holiday season and be crashed into by some drunken driver, or will drive too fast and will make a turn too fast, or some other way there will be an accident and life will come to a sudden and jarring halt. There will be the scream of brakes, then the crash of torn metal and the wail of an ambulance siren. Then there will be white-robed nurses and the smell of the anesthetic and doctors working over you, then you will go out to meet God. Somebody who hears me now will die in 1959.

Or somebody now has the germs of cancer. You do not know it, but somewhere, in a sore, or somewhere—it may be from a stomach ulcer; it may be in the lungs from tobacco irritation; it may be on the lips from a pipe; it may be in the breast or womb; it may be in some of the hidden organs—that a cancer begins and before this year is gone you will go out to meet God. I do not know.

While I was down in Winston-Salem I went to see a lovely Christian woman who lay sick in

her bed. The doctors had plainly said, "It has gone too far. You won't be here long." I talked and had prayer with her. She loved the Lord, she hated to leave her little family. Since then she has gone out to meet God and has left a brokenhearted husband, a noble Christian man, and little children.

I say, somebody will die, now. It won't be long until those ravages will appear. It may be from a stroke, or it may be from failure of the heart, or it may be some sudden infection—I do not know. But I am saying that some will die in 1959.

5. Jesus May Come in 1959

What else may happen this year? Jesus may come. Oh, come, Lord Jesus! Come, Lord Jesus! Jesus may come. I do not think there are any signs by which we can tell. I do not think God intended for anybody to know. He plainly says nobody knows the day or the hour; but oh, the glad truth—Jesus may come before this year is gone, maybe before another day, maybe before another sun ever rises or sets. It may be before I eat another meal; it may be before you hear another sermon, Jesus will come. Oh, "in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Jesus may come. I would say this: "I am going to get ready for 1959. I am going to put my trust in the Lord Jesus and be sure I am saved; then I will commit my life to Him and will be ready for whatever He plans for me in 1959."

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There is an old story which tells of an Italian duke who went on board a galley ship. As he passed the crew of slaves he asked several of them what their offenses were. Every one laid the blame to someone else, saying his brother was to blame or the judge was bribed. One sturdy young fellow said: "My lord, I am justly in here. I wanted money and I stole it. No one is to blame but myself." The duke on hearing this seized him by the shoulder, saying, "You rogue! What are you doing here among so many honest men? Get you out of their company!" The young fellow was then set at liberty, while the rest were left to tug at the oars.

—Spurgeon.

Last Sermon

(Continued from page 1)

an account of our stewardship; and, lastly, we will consider the weighty reason in the text, which will come with force to each of us sooner or later: "Thou mayest be no longer steward."

The Reasonable Demand

First, then, let us consider this REASONABLE DEMAND, and let each one of us try to comply with it: "Give an account of thy stewardship." Thou man of God, thou Christless soul, thou aged man, thou young sister, "give an account of thy stewardship."

First, give an account of the stewardship of **THY TIME**.

How hast thou spent it? Have not many hours been allowed to run to waste, or worse than waste, in frivolity and sin? Hast thou lived as a dying man should live? Hast thou employed thine hours as remembering that they are very few, and more precious than the diamonds in an emperor's crown? What about thy time? Has there not been much of it spent in indolence, in frothy talk, or that did not minister to edification?

Thou needest not accuse thyself for time spent in lawful recreation that may sustain thy body, and fit it better for the Lord's service. It is well that thou shouldst have such recreation; but how much time is utterly wasted by some people, neither used for the good of this world, nor of that which is to come, but wholly frittered away in the service of sin, and self, and Satan!

Where, for instance, did some of you spend yesterday, and how did you employ its precious hours? I will but bring that one day to your remembrance: was it a well-spent day? Is that hour well spent that is passed in the company of drunkards? Call you that day well spent that is given up to riotings, or that night that is defiled with wantonness? I charge you now to answer this question. For every moment that God has lent to you, he will ask for an account of what you did with it.

"Give an account of thy stewardship," next, as to **THY TALENTS**.

We all vary in our natural gifts and in our acquirements. One has the tongue of eloquence; another has the pen of a ready writer; a third has the artistic eye that discerns beauty. But, whichever of these gifts we may have, they belong to God and ought to be used in His service. Some have only such gifts as qualify them to earn their daily bread by manual labour. They have but little mental power; yet for that little they must give an account, and also for the physical strength with which God has blessed them.

There is no person here without a talent of some sort or other; there is no one individual here without some form of power either given by nature or acquired by education. We are all endowed in some degree or other, and we must each one give an account for that talent. What an account must some give, who have been endowed with ten talents, but have wasted them all! What must be the account rendered by a Napoleon? What must be the reckoning given in by a Voltaire, with all the splendour of his intellect laid at the feet of Satan, and desecrated to the damnation of mankind?

Yet, while you think of these great ones of the earth, do not forget yourselves. What has been your special gift? You can speak well enough in some companies; have you ever spoken for Christ? You can write well, you judge

that you have no mean gift in that direction; has your pen never written a line that will bring your fellow-men to the service of the Saviour?

Next, give an account of **THY SUBSTANCE**.

We vary greatly as to our temporal circumstances. I suppose there are a few present to whom God has entrusted great wealth, more to whom He has given considerable substance, and that to most of us He has given somewhat more than is absolutely necessary for our actual wants. But whether it is much or little, we must give an account for it all. I do not know what some rich professors will have to say concerning that which they give to the cause of God. It is no tithe of their substance; nay, it is, as it were, but the cheese-parings, and the candle-ends, and these they only give for the sake of appearance, because it would not look respectable if they were altogether to withhold them. The church's coffers could never be so empty as they are if it were not that some of the stewards in the church are not faithful to their trust.

It is very sad to think of some of the great men in our own country who have incomes which, in a single month, would furnish a competent support for an entire family during their whole lives. I wonder what sort of reckoning theirs will be when they have to give an account of hundreds of thousands or even millions of pounds. With some of them, all that they can say will be, "So much lost on the race-course; so much spent upon a paramour; so much paid for diamonds; so much squandered in this form of waste; and so much in that." But for the poor and needy who are perishing in our streets, the multitudes who crave even necessary bread, some of them have done nothing at all. There are grand exceptions, names that shall live as long as philanthropy is prized amongst mankind; but the exceptions are so terribly few, that when the rich men of England are indicted at the bar of God, as they certainly will be, the account of their stewardship will be a truly terrible one.

Yet what are you, and what am I, to judge thus, if we cannot say that we have been faithful with our little? I ask you if you have, and I pray you to make a reckoning in your mind now of your stewardship of the gold, or the silver, or the copper, with which God has entrusted you.

We must give an account, in the next place, of **OUR INFLUENCE**.

Everybody has some kind of influence. The mother who never leaves the nursery has a wondrous influence over those little children of hers, though no neighbour feels the force of her influence, and no one but her own little ones are affected by her faithfulness. And who knows but that she is pressing to her bosom perhaps a Whitefield, who will thunder out the Gospel through the length and breadth of the land; or perhaps, on the other hand, an infidel, whose dreadful blasphemies shall ruin multitudes? There is an influence that the mother has for which she must give an account to God.

And the father's influence,—oh! fathers, you cannot shake off your obligations to your children by sending them to school, whether to a Sunday School or a boarding-school. They are your children, and you must give an account of your stewardship concerning your own offspring.

Ay, and even the nurse girl, though she seems of small note in the commonwealth, yet she also has an influence over her little charge which she must use for Christ.

Not only he who thrills a senate with his oratory, but he also who speaks a word from the carpenter's bench—each has his influence, and each must use it and give an account of it; not merely the man who, by refusing to lend his millions, could prevent the horrors of war, but the man who with a smile might help to laugh at sin or with a word of rebuke might show that he abhorred it. There is no one of you without influence, and I ask you now how you have used it. Has it always been on the side of the Lord? "Give an account of thy stewardship," for that influence will not always last.

We might pass on to consider all the other things that God has entrusted to us, but time would fail us; so I would remind you, with much affection, that the account which you will have to render, and which I ask you to render now, is not an account concerning other people. Oh, how nice it would be if we had to do that, would it not? With what gusto some would undertake the task if they had to give in a report upon other people's characters! How easily each of us can play the detective upon our fellows! How ready we are to say of this man, "Oh, yes! he gives away a good deal of money, but it is only out of ostentation," or of that woman, "Yes, she appears to be a Christian, but you do not know her private life," or of that minister of the Gospel, "Yes, he is very zealous; but he makes a good thing out of his ministry." We like thus to reckon upon our fellow-creatures, and our arithmetic is wonderfully accurate—at least, so we think; but when other people cast us up according to the same rule, the arithmetic seems terribly out of order, and we cannot believe it to be right.

Ah! but at the great judgment we shall not be asked to give an account for others, neither will I ask any of you now to be thinking about the conduct of others. What if others are worse than you are—does that make you the better or the less guilty? What if others are not all they seem to be. Perhaps neither are you. At any rate, their hypocrisy shall not make your pretence to be true. Judge yourselves, that ye be not judged. Let each man thrust the lancet into his own wound and see to the affairs of his own soul, for each one must give account of himself to God.

Remember, too, that you are not called upon to give an account to others. Alas! there are many people who seem to live only that they may win the esteem of their fellows. There is somebody to whom we look up; if we do but have that somebody's smile, we think all is well. Perhaps some here are broken-hearted because that smile has vanished and they have been misjudged and unjustly condemned. It is a small matter to be judged of man's judgment; and who is he that judges another man's servant? To his own Master the servant shall stand or fall, and not to this interloping judge.

When the opinion of one leans this way, and of another goes the other way, when we see public opinion to be as restless and changing as the vane upon the church steeple, swinging round with every wind that blows, we may well bid defiance to it all, and thank God that the last bar is not swayed by the follies of the times, and that the Great Judge will not give His verdict according to the whimsies of an hour, but according to the rule of absolute equity.

Yet remember that, if it be hard to be judged of man, it will be sterner still to be judged of God. If, weighed even in the balances of men, some of us are found wanting, how shall we bear to be put into the unerring scales adjudged by the divine hand, to be adjudged by Him who cannot err, and to have our destiny fixed for all eternity, either in Heaven or in Hell? Recollect this, and be ready to give an account of thy stewardship, not to thy fellow-creature, but to the great Creator and Judge of all.

Remember also, that the account to be rendered will be from every man, from every man personally concerning himself; and whatever another man's account may be, it will not affect him. Some men will not have been any

better than others of you have been; yet if you perish as they perish, a numerous company will not make Hell any the cooler. If some men shall have been worse than others of you have been, it certainly will not diminish your punishment if you know that their doom is heavier than your own.

Forget, for a while, that there are any other men in the world, and stand individually and separately before those awful eyes which are searching you through and through, for God will judge each of you as if there were no other men to judge, and read your inmost heart, as if He had not another object to look upon. Give an account, then, of thy stewardship.

Now let us examine

Some Reasons Why We Should At Once Give An Account of Our Stewardship

It was a maxim of Pythagoras that each of his disciples should every eventide give in a record of the actions of the day. I think it is well to do so; for we cannot too often take a retrospect of the past. But since, perhaps, some of you may have been lax in this duty, let me remind you that we have come, as it were, to the eventide of the year, and it seems to be most suitable that, before we cross into another year of grace, we should in our heart and conscience take stock, and give an account of our stewardship.

Sit down a while, pilgrim; sit down a while. Here is the milestone marked with the end of another year; sit down upon it, put thine hand to thy brow and think, and lay thine hand upon thy heart, and search and see what is there. This last Sabbath evening in the year is a most fitting time for giving in this account, and I ask you to use it in making up the account which you have to present before God; and if you feel unwilling to do it, I shall the more earnestly press you to do it.

There are no persons who so dislike to look into their account-books as those who are insolvent. Those who keep no books, when they come before the court, are understood to be rogues of the first water; and men who keep no mental memoranda of the past and bring up no recollections with regard to their sins, having tried to forget them all, may depend upon it that they are deceiving themselves. If you dare not search your hearts, I am afraid there is a reason for that fear, and that above all others you ought to be diligent in this search.

Permit me to remind you that, if all should be wrong with you, it is best for you to know it. It is only the most reckless seaman who would rather not know whether there is a rock in the course that he is sailing. Are you like the ostrich that, having cov-

ered its head in the sand and shut its eyes to the hunter, thinks it is all secure? I pray you, seek to know the worst of your case. It seems to me that any honest and sane man would want to do this.

There is nothing a wise man hates more, when he is sick, than to have a doctor attending him, who will always, if he can, give a flattering report, but will never speak the truth about his patient. Let not your heart flatter you any longer, but say to it, "My soul, make out an honest account, see what and where thou art, and whether thou art God's servant or not, doing as God would have thee do."

Believer in Christ, it will be well for you to make out this account, because you will find that it will help you to prize your Saviour more. I never look into my own heart without first feeling shame, and afterwards feeling greater love to Him who has eternally loved such a sinner as I am. I am sure it will drive you to your knees if you honestly search your own lives. There is enough in the history of a single week to make you prize your Redeemer more than ever, if you fully realize the guilt of that one week, and the greatness of His grace in pardoning it. O Christian, if you would be driven nearer to your Lord, search and see, confess, repent, and seek forgiveness. Go again to the cross because you have again felt the burden of the sin that nailed your Saviour there.

And, ungodly man, I press you also to give an account of your stewardship, because, mayhap, the same result may come to you, if you find that you cannot give in so good an account as you thought


(Continued on page 6)

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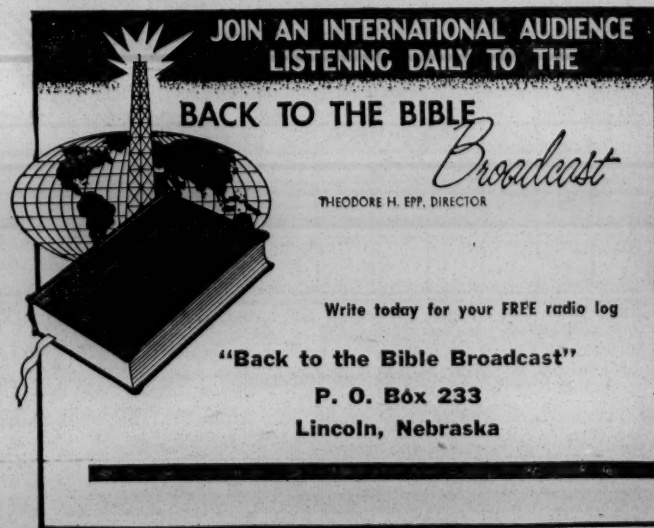
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Last Sermon

(Continued from page 5)

you could when you were wrapped up in self-righteousness. Perhaps you may be alarmed and dismayed when you see the true state of the case, and it may be that God the Holy Spirit will lead you to say, "I will go to Jesus, for I am undone without Him. I will hasten to His cross, for I need the pardon that His blood has bought. I will now go with the language of confession on my lips and beseech Him to accept me ere another year begins."

I do pray at this moment that this day may be the last one you will spend in sin, and that tomorrow may be a spiritual birthday to you, the first day in which

you shall rejoice in a Saviour; nay, that this very night you may be born again and become a new creature in Christ Jesus.

And now, lastly, let us consider

The Reason Which the Master Gives: "Give An Account of Thy Stewardship, For Thou Mayest Be No Longer Steward."

This may happen in various ways. It may be that some here may live for years, and yet be no longer stewards. A preacher may be laid aside, his voice gone, his mental faculties weakened, he is "no longer steward." One is thankful to have further opportunities of serving the Lord and trying to bring sinners to the Saviour. Work for God while you can! It is one of the bitterest regrets a man can

know, to lie on his bed, to be unable to speak, and to think to himself, "I wish I could preach that sermon over again. I did not drive that nail home with all the force I ought to have used; I have not been earnest enough in pleading with sinners, I have not wrestled even to agony over the salvation of their souls."

It may be possible, my dear brother minister, that you and I may have twenty or thirty years of being laid aside from active service; then let us work while we can, ere the night cometh when no man can work. Let us seize the oar of the lifeboat and row out over the stormy sea, seeking to snatch the drowning ones from yonder wreck, for the time may come when our strong right arm shall be palsied, and when we can do no more.

There is a great deal more said in the Bible about praise than prayer; yet how few praise meetings there are!—Moody.

Yes, and rich professors may have to give an account of their stewardship and be no longer stewards. There were some of that kind when the recent financial panic came; though they had much before the crash, they had nothing left afterwards, so they could be no longer stewards of the wealth that had been taken from them. It must be a cause of deep regret to men in that position if they cannot give a good account of their stewardship, because they have done but little good with their wealth while they had it; and think, you to whom God has given great possessions, how soon He may take them from you, for riches abide not for ever. Behold, they take to themselves wings, and fly away. I know of no better way of clipping their wings than by giving generously to the cause of God and using in His service all that you can.

It would be a subject for continual regret to you, I am sure, if you came down to poverty, not so much that you had descended in the social scale, for that you could bear, if it came by mere misfortune through the providence of God; but if you felt, "I did not do what I should have done when I had wealth,"—that would be the arrow which would pierce you to the heart. It may be so with some of you. At any rate, I feel that there are some of you who are poor because God will not lend His money where He knows that it will be locked up, and not put out to good interest in His cause. What little you have is all hidden away, so the Lord will not trust you with more; He sees you are not fit to be one of His stewards. There are some, on the other hand, whom God has entrusted with much because He sees that they use it wisely in promoting the interests of His kingdom.

But, after all, to every man, whether he be rich, or whether he be in the office of the ministry, *there may be a close of his stewardship before he dies.* The mother has her little children swept away one after another; this is the message to her, "Thou mayest be no longer steward." The teacher has his class scattered, or he is himself unable to go to the school; the word to him also is, "Thou mayest be no longer steward." The man who went to his work, who might have spoken to his fellow-workman, is removed, perhaps to another land, or he is placed in a position where his mouth is shut; now he can be no longer steward. Use all opportunities while you have them, catch them on the wing, serve God while you can today! today! today! today! Let each golden moment have its pressing service rendered unto God, lest it should be said to thee, "Thou mayest be no longer steward."

But we shall soon be no longer stewards in another sense. *The hour must come for us to die.* Out of our large congregation we have constant reminders that those who have served us as a church and have served God faithfully in his church, cannot abide with us for

ever. One or another, whom we have loved and honoured, gives in his account, and passes to his rest. So will it be in turn with the pastor, with the deacons, and with the elders.

Do not put away the thought of that day, my fellow-workers, as though you were immortal. It may come to us on a sudden; no grey hairs may cover our heads, but while we are yet in the full strength of manly vigour, you or I may be called to give in our account.

What think ye? What think ye? Could you gather up your feet in the bed and look into eternity without feeling the cold sweat of fear stand upon your brow? What think ye? Could you face the great judgment-seat and say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day . . . I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith"? (II Tim. 1:12; 4:7). Oh! God be praised if we are able to say that! What monuments of mercy will you and I be if we are able to hear our Lord say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

By the fact that God is continually removing from us one and another, I ask you to remember that you also will soon depart. Therefore, be making up your account. Rest in Christ more confidently; love God more earnestly; serve your generation more intensely; live while you live; play not at living, but live in real earnest, and let it never be said of you that you trod so lightly on the sands of time that you left no impress there. Make your mark upon your age, and fill your appointed place as God shall help you, that when you are gathered to your fathers, you may not be forgotten, but the church may remember you because in her midst there are children born to God through your means.

As for the unconverted here, need I tell them that they must soon depart and be no longer stewards? You must go from your business, O trader; you must go from your merchandise, O merchant; you must go from your bench, O artisan; you must go from your machine, O engineer; you must each depart, and go to that bourne from which no traveller returns. Be ye ready! Be ye ready! I will ring the alarm bell for some of you; perhaps my text is a prophecy meant for some man here, "Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward."

Thou hast had children about thee, and thou hast taught them blasphemy and drunkenness; or thou hast had workmen in thine employ, and thou hast laughed at their religion, or aided and abetted them in sin; thou hast had talent, but thou hast used that talent in the service of the evil one; thou hast had gold, but thou hast lavished it upon wantonness; now give an account of it all! Ah, you may not heed what I say; but you will have to heed what will be said to you at another time. You will see this matter in another light when the death-angel shall put his cold, freezing hand upon your shoulder and shall say to you, "Give an account! Give an account! Give an account of your stewardship!"

O Saviour, Son of God, put thy pierced hand on these blind souls and give them light, that they may be able to render up their account with joy and not with grief! Give them grace to believe in Thy name and trust in Thine atoning sacrifice, for this is the way of salvation.

O poor sinners, trust in Christ Jesus and Him crucified! You cannot be saved by your stewardship, any of you; but unfaithful stewardship will ruin you. Christ crucified is your only hope of salvation. Look unto Him, and live. Oh, look unto Him now!

—The End—

(From SERMONS FOR SPECIAL DAYS AND OCCASIONS, a book selling for \$2.95. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, and used by permission.)

"Sword Wit Sharpener"

Vision of John on the Isle of Patmos
Revelation 1

CLEWS ACROSS

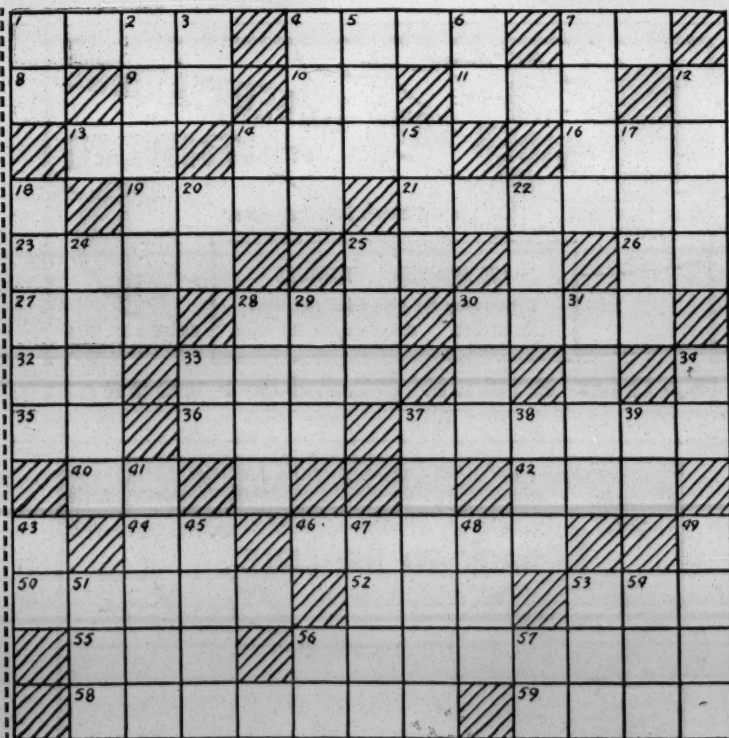
- 1 "Him which is, and which was, and which is to . . ."
- 4 "Who bare record of the . . . of God"
- 7 "And . . . the midst of the seven candlesticks one"
- 8 " . . . am Alpha and Omega."
- 9 "I John, who also . . . your brother"
- 10 "And . . . laid his right hand upon me."
- 11 "And . . . eyes were as a flame of fire."
- 13 And (Lat.), e—
- 14 "Shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to . . ."
- 16 Native of the Laos States
- 19 "Unto him . . . loved us"
- 21 Old form of the verb "live"
- 23 Chinese money of account, —e—
- 25 Grandchild (Scot.)
- 26 "He that hath . . . ear, let him hear." (Rev. 2)
- 27 "Grace be unto you, . . . peace"
- 28 "His countenance . . . as the sun shineth in his strength."
- 30 "And the first begotten of the . . ."
- 32 Right Guard (Football abbr.)
- 33 "I Jesus have . . . mine angel to testify unto you." (Rev. 22)
- 35 A compass point (abbr.)
- 36 "The beginning . . . the ending"
- 37 " . . . he cometh with clouds."
- 40 Low frequency (abbr.)
- 42 Fresh-water fish, i—
- 43 " . . . was in the Spirit on the Lord's day."
- 44 "I . . . the first and the last."
- 46 "Which was dead, and is . . ." (Rev. 2)
- 50 "Send it unto the . . . churches."
- 52 In ancient Laconia, a clan (Greek Hist.)
- 53 "I turned to . . . the voice that spake with me."
- 55 "To him be glory and dominion . . . ever and ever"
- 56 Forever
- 58 Paid another's expenses for entertainment, t—
- 59 Feminine name

CLEWS DOWN

- 1 Channel Islands (abbr.)
- 2 Entangled, —t—
- 3 Printers' measure
- 4 " . . . thou seest, write in a book."
- 5 Rearrange "EOS."
- 6 Deadhead (abbr.)
- 7 "Was in the . . . that is called Patmos"
- 12 " . . . to the seven churches which are in Asia"
- 14 Pennsylvania (abbr.)
- 15 Furtive, —y
- 17 A Canaanite who had a threshing-floor near the cave of Machpelah (Gen. 50) A—
- 18 "He had in his right hand seven . . ."
- 20 House of Lords (abbr.)
- 22 Contend
- 24 "Signified it by his . . . unto his servant John"
- 25 Combining form meaning "bone," o—
- 28 "Out of his mouth . . . a sharp twoedged sword."
- 29 "His head . . . his hairs were white like wool."
- 30 "Blessed are the dead which . . . in the Lord." (Rev. 14)
- 31 One of the sons of Gad (Num. 26), —r—
- 33 A western continent (abbr.)
- 34 Diminutive for Edgar
- 37 Influenced by a bribe
- 38 Hasten
- 39 The (Fr.), —e
- 41 Good will
- 43 "Blessed . . . he that readeth."
- 45 Bare
- 47 "As many as I . . . I rebuke and chasten." (Rev. 3)
- 48 Verse (abbr.)
- 49 "No night there; and they . . . no candle" (Rev. 22)
- 51 Newt, —t
- 53 "One like unto the . . . of man"
- 54 A son of Gad (Gen. 46)
- 56 Same as 13 across
- 57 "Heard behind . . . a great voice, as of a trumpet"

Deadline: January 5, 1959

PUZZLE NO. 52



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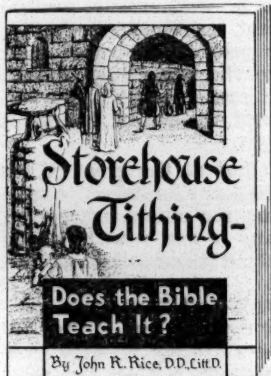
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Puzzle Number 52

Storehouse Tithing— Does the Bible Teach It?

By Dr. John R. Rice



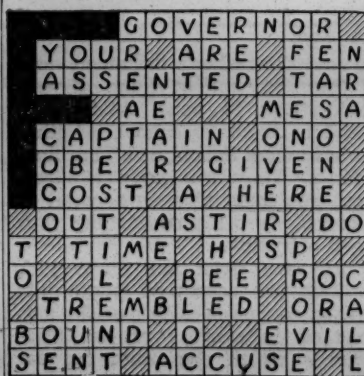
This is a *needed* study. No matter your personal opinion or preconceived notion, you will want this exciting, biblical, power-packed treatise on one of the church's most controversial subjects in our day. The burden of the booklet can be summed up in the single word "*proof*!" Here is the proof of reason, the proof of scholarship, and, best of all, the proof of clear Bible teaching about giving. Much is made of the lordship of Jesus Christ in a Christian's giving.

You will find *Storehouse Tithing—Does the Bible Teach It?* to be a very valuable aid in clearing up the host of confusion which has centered around the teaching of "storehouse" tithing. This is a thorough examination of the subject.

THE RULES

1. Fill in the empty blanks according to the clues given. Answers must be complete and correct.
2. PRINT (not write) your name and address in the blank below the puzzle. (Please include country in foreign addresses.) This coupon will serve as your address label for the envelope containing your prize. Mail to: PUZZLE EDITOR, THE SWORD OF THE LORD, Wheaton, Illinois. If you do not wish to cut up your copy of the paper, you may print (not more than three inches wide) on a separate sheet of paper your name and address, and the answers according to the clue numbers given. Entries will not be returned.
3. In order for you to receive the book, *Storehouse Tithing—Does the Bible Teach It?*, your entry must be postmarked by midnight, January 5, 1959. If your paper arrives after the deadline date, please place the date of arrival on the entry. The answer to Puzzle Number 52 will appear in the January 16 issue of THE SWORD OF THE LORD.
4. Each person having a correct entry will receive a coupon along with the weekly prize. *Save these coupons!* They are important! At the end of the year those who have fifty coupons will receive a Scofield Bible. Those who have as many as thirty coupons will receive a World Bible. Please remember that the coupons which you have are the only record of

Answer to Puzzle No. 49



Broken Vows or, Back to Bethel

(Continued from page 1)

is a contradiction of your profession that you are born again. The born-again child of God doesn't want to sin, but the born-again child of God *does* sin. And backsliding in a spiritual way is a Bible truth.

The Sorrows of Backsliding

Noah's feet were hardly dry before he got drunk and lay naked in front of his boys and got up and put a curse on his youngest son. Old Noah backslid. And today, there are a lot of drunken backsliders across this country with their names on the church rolls.

Abraham left Canaan and went down into Egypt. He quit walking by faith and went to walking by sight. Thus he became a curse upon the Egyptians. God had to dig him out and run him out of Egypt, back up into the land of Canaan. Lot beheld the plain, that it was well watered everywhere. Looking toward Sodom, he pitched his tent in that direction and became a backslider in the city of Sodom where he lost everything he had—his married daughters, his wife, and did worse than that with his two single daughters. Lot was a backslider saved man. The Bible calls him a righteous man. The Bible says he grieved his righteous soul from day to day

slidden. Deacons get backslidden. Christian men and women backslide.

Here is a story of a man called Jacob, the grandson of Abraham. Isaac and Rebekah were the parents of twin sons, Jacob and Esau. Esau, being the first born, was entitled to the birthright, also to the blessing. Now there is a difference between the birthright and the blessing, though they both went to the same person. The birthright was the privilege of the older or eldest son in a Hebrew family to step into the father's shoes at the father's death and take control of everything and manage and direct affairs. That was the natural birthright of the oldest son, or the elder son, in this case.

Now in addition to that privilege of the oldest son, prior to the father's death, he would call in this elder son, lay his hand on his head and say a prayer over him. That was the blessing. By virtue of the fact that Esau was born first of the two, that gave him the birthright and the blessing.

It so happened that Esau was the favorite son of his father Isaac. This great big broad-shouldered, double-jointed, raw-boned, sun-tanned, hairy-chested, ham-fisted fellow who spent a lot of his time outside would have made a good fullback on anybody's football team. He was the joy of his father.

Jacob, on the other hand, stayed around the house. No doubt he dried the dishes, swept the floors, did the chores for Mamma. He

is he that hath taken venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten and have blessed him?" Esau then wept and a family quarrel broke out. "Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him," says Genesis 27:41. They had quite a fight in that family, quite a racket. When Esau looked at that poor, old, blind, decrepit dad of his, then at that little conniving, scheming, crooked brother, he said, "That's all right. Dad has one foot in the grave and the other on a banana peel. I will not stir up trouble now, but just wait till Dad is in the grave—I'll get you then." In the words of the Scripture, he said, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob."

He got out his barlow, to sharpen it; he spit on his whetrock. He was determined he would kill his brother Jacob.

You know, a lot of families have gotten along fine until Pa and Ma died. Then there was a fight, maybe a bloody battle, over the heritage, over what was left. Every once in a while some asinine, sawdust-brained, simple-headed nitwit wobbles up to me and says, "Well, the Bible is out of date." The only trouble with him is he just doesn't know the Bible. Brother, it is very much up to date, especially this story I am talking about this morning.

How often we see it happen! Families go along in poverty and hardship. They love the Lord and live together; they are a power for God and a testimony for Christ. Then death comes for the parents, then the kids get to fussing and fighting over what was left. All of them quit the church, get to drinking, go to the devil. The worst messes you ever saw grow out of that situation.

That is what happened here. The mother called Jacob in and said, "Son, I'm awfully sorry, but this thing has gotten into a terrible mess. I expect you had better go back where we came from. Your uncle Laban lives down there; tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away. He will cool off after awhile. This will blow over, then I will send for you and you can come back." As far as we know, that was the last time Rebekah ever looked on the face of Jacob.

"What a tangled web we weave,
When first we practice to deceive."

So Jacob got his belongings together and headed out. He didn't have any fast-flying airlines to go by. He didn't have any air-conditioned busses to ride on. There were no great, high-powered locomotives pulling long trains which have every comfort. No, he didn't even have an automobile—air-conditioned or otherwise. Jacob headed out afoot, headed back where he had come from.

The evening shadows began to fall. When the sun slid down in the West, Jacob thought about a place to spend the night. He looked around. No tourist court, no hotel out in that barren country. He spotted a rock. So he lay down with his body on the ground and his head on the rock. That night he dreamed. He saw a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood above it. His heart was gripped as God said, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth . . . and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

God made certain promises to him. Jacob then vowed a vow to God. He asked God for three things, and he promised God three things.

Did you ever notice when you ask God for something, you will always promise him something? Well, that is perfectly all right. Make a deal with God. He is the best One you can make a deal with. He will live up to His part of the deal. He won't double-cross you in any way.

Jacob's Vow

A careful analysis of this vow that Jacob made reveals that he asked God for three things and he promised God three things. The three things he asked God for were:

First, the presence of God: "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go . . ."

Second, the provision of God: "And will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on . . ."

Third, the peace and protection of God: "So that I come again to my father's house in peace . . ."

The three things Jacob promised God were:

First, fidelity to God: "Then shall the Lord be my God . . ."

Second, that Bethel should be his place of worship: "And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house . . ."

Third, a tithe of all his possessions: "And of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

Even right in the middle of his prayer when he talked to God he could hear that old knife scraping on that whetrock back there in Esau's hand. He couldn't forget the wrong he did.

Neither can you forget the wrong that you do to other people. If you have driven a close bargain, if you have schemed and betrayed somebody's confidence, you can't forget it. When you get on your knees before God to talk to Him, that is the best time of all to remember it! God will bring it to your mind.

With this vow fresh in his heart and on his lips, he went into the land of his forefathers, met the girl of his dreams, and served seven years for her. Then when the time for the wedding came, the father-in-law Laban worked a trick on Jacob and got him to marry the other daughter Leah instead of Rachel, the girl he loved. She was veiled and he didn't see who she was until he lifted the veil. He had married the wrong girl!

Well, he didn't have much complaint. He had deceived his own decrepit father; now he is reaping what he sowed seven years before. God has a way of letting the chickens come home to roost. You may fool a judge, you may fool your wife, you may fool your neighbors, you may fool the folks around you—but you can't fool God!

So right there, Jacob began to have the chickens come home to roost. He served seven more years to get the girl of his dreams. And then he got ready to go to his own country with his wives and children. His father-in-law, Laban, brought him in and said, "I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry; for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake."

Dear reader, a word of instruction is not out of order just here. If you rent your property, do so

to a Christian. It may be that God will bless your investments for the sake of that Christian whom you rent your property to. If you employ people to work for you in any way, employ an earnest Christian. It may be that God will bless your business because of the Christian employee.

Jacob said to Laban, "Well, you know I've got a bunch of kids coming on. I will have to put them in college and high school, and give them an education. I can't go on just working like we are."

Quite naturally, Jacob's father-in-law did not wish to part company with this son-in-law, so he said, "Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it" (Gen. 30:28). Jacob then reminds his father-in-law what the father-in-law has already confessed, how God has blessed him and multiplied his herd; so Jacob makes this proposition to him: "I will take the brown sheep and you take the white sheep. And I'll take the spotted cows and you take the solid-colored cows."

Laban said, "That sounds like a good proposition. I would be very glad to do that. That's fine."

That night after Jacob went to bed and got out of sight, the old man Laban called the boys in and said, "Boys, we have that son-in-law where we want him now. You would never guess what kind of a deal I drove through with him. He is going to work for us on the basis that he will get the brown sheep and we'll get the white sheep from the increase of the flock. He will get the spotted cows and we'll get the solid-colored cows. Now here's what I want you to do. You get up early in the morning before he gets up—he sleeps rather late. Take every brown sheep in the flock way across Raccoon Ridge and put them over in that pasture in Possum Hollow—separate them completely." Then he said, "Get that bunch of spotted cows and that old spotted bull and take them clear across down there on that lowland bottom pasture."

When Jacob arose the next morning and started out with a

(Continued on page 8)

Happy New Year

New mercies, new blessings, new light on the way,
New courage, new hope, and strength for each day,
New notes of thanksgiving, new chords of delight,
New praise in the morning, new songs in the night,
New wine in thy chalice, new altars to raise,
New fruits for thy Master, new garments for praise,
New gifts from His treasures, new smiles from His face,
New streams from the fountain of infinite grace,
New stars for thy crown, and new tokens of love,
New gleams of the glory that waits thee above,
New light of His countenance, full and unpriced,
All this to be the joy of thy new life in Christ.

—Frances Ridley Havergal.

with the filthy conversation of the wicked. Backslid into Sodom!

Between the time he went to deliver the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt and the time he actually did, Moses turned his back on God's high command, killed a man in a brawl, and for forty years became a backslidden shepherd at the back side of the desert.

David crossed the threshold of another man's home, robbed it of its purity, committed adultery with the woman, called the husband from the army and made him drunk. When that ruse failed, he killed the husband and married the woman. He would have been Hero Number 1 in Hollywood. Be immoral with another man's wife or a woman's husband, kill the companion, marry that one that you were immoral with—that will give you the big headlines in Hollywood and on television.

Instead of going to Nineveh as God called him to do, Jonah bought passage on a ship and started to sail in the other direction. God had to send a storm to bring him back and make him preach the Gospel to the Ninevites.

The night Jesus was betrayed, Simon Peter cursed and swore and denied that he even knew the Lord. He backslid. John Mark turned back. Demas fell in love with the present world. Even the great Apostle Paul said, "The good that I would do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do . . . When I would do good, evil is present with me." He knew that vacillating experience of a Christian, that period of growing stale, cold, indifferent, and getting out of the will of God.

Before Jacob Met God

Now I want to talk to you about that experience, for if you have been a Christian very long you have had that experience. You have had that experience if you have been a preacher very long, because preachers get back-

was Mamma's little man, her pet.

There came a time when Esau went hunting. He had the luck that I generally have—hunt all day, wear bunions on your feet, and kill nothing! Esau came back famished and worn-out, with feet blistered and no luck at all. Jacob met Esau and entered into an agreement with him whereby he traded him a mess of lentiles, or beans we will call it to make it practical, for the birthright, that is, the privilege of stepping into the father's shoes at the father's death and assuming control of domestic and family affairs. He traded with Esau for his birthright.

It came time for Isaac to die. He called in Esau and said, "Son, it is now time for me to pronounce on you the blessing. Go kill a young deer, prepare it, and I will pronounce the blessing on you. Then I will be ready to die."

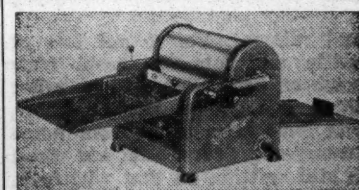
Standing behind the door and hearing the proposition of the father to Esau, the mother, Rebekah, called Jacob and said, "Son, you have already had the birthright. Now get that blessing, too. You run out yonder and kill a kid from the flock and bring it here. I'll season and cook it until your dad can't tell the difference between that and the young fawn Esau is to kill."

So Jacob hotfooted it right out to the flock, killed one, brought it in. The mother fixed it up, seasoned it, and put the wool on Jacob's wrists (because Esau was a hairy man and Jacob was smooth-skinned). Jacob went in, and here is poor old blind, decrepit, almost-dead Isaac.

He listens to Jacob, but he can't see since he is blind. "The voice sounds like Jacobs, but the hands are the hands of Esau," he says. He eats of this meat that has been prepared, then puts his hand on Jacob's head and pronounces on him the blessing.

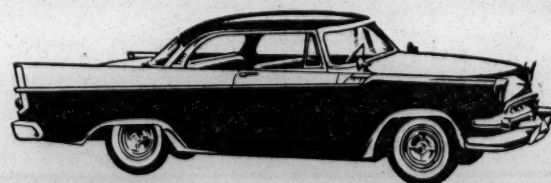
Esau later came in, but Isaac said to his son, "Why, son, I've already eaten! I've already pronounced the blessing. Who, where

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Broken Vows or, Back to Bethel

(Continued from page 7)

bunch of sheep and some cows, every sheep he had in the herd was white and every cow was solid colored. Not a spotted one in there! After awhile the little lambs began to fall and practically every one of them was a brown lamb in a white flock of sheep! Every calf was a spotted calf!

Old man Laban called Jacob in and said, "Say, this thing hasn't worked out right. Let's change that around. Let me have the brown sheep and you take the white ones. Let me have the spotted-colored calves and you take the solid-colored calves."

Jacob said, "Okey-doke (that good old English term!) All right." And the next crop of calves—everyone of them was a solid-colored calf and every sheep was a white one. The Bible says that Laban changed Jacob's wages ten times in seven years to try to shift that thing around. And every time he changed it, it worked out to Jacob's advantage. He had used his own ingenuity in bringing it about, too.

Good neighbors, you don't have to worry a great deal about people cheating and defrauding you if God is your Partner. Jacob proved that in his experience.

So at the end of twenty-one years, God appeared to Jacob and said, "Jacob, twenty-one years ago I told you that if you would stay by Me, I would stay by you. Now I want you to come back to Beth-el where I met you when you were running away from Esau. You've got a big family. I've been with you. I've given you food

out another herd of sheep and another herd of cattle. String them all out." He instructed the man with the first group, "When you meet Esau with those four-hundred armed horsemen and they are all ready to jump on us, you say, 'Why, these are gifts from thy servant Jacob.'" His scheme was to buy Esau off, to bribe him. Jacob said, "I'm going to buy him off."

So he scattered the sheep out, and the cattle out, and the family out. When evening shadows came, somehow old Jacob knew he was wrong. Somehow he couldn't get away from it. Back over here across the creek God began to wrestle and deal with old Jacob. The night hours wore on; God was still wrestling with Jacob. If you will read the Bible, you will find God wrestling with Jacob; Jacob wasn't wrestling with God. The morning dawn began to come. The angel of the Lord said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh."

But Jacob answered, "Oh, no! Oh, no! Oh, no! I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. Don't you leave till you give me a blessing."

The angel smote Jacob's thigh and knocked it out of joint. Then the Bible says that as the sun arose, Jacob walked over across that old creek, limping on that thigh thrown out of joint. He limped by that first bunch of cattle; he limped by that first bunch of sheep; he limped by that second bunch of sheep; he limped by that next bunch of sheep; then he limped on by the next crowd. Instead of being down at the tail end, he was right up at the front. When he met Esau, they fell on each other's necks and wept and kissed each other.

God kept His promise! God was with him. God blessed him. God

Beth-el, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother" (Gen. 35:1).

How often in our calamities, sorrows, griefs and tragedies God must come to us and call us back to our vows! So here God calls upon Jacob to keep his vow and to return to Bethel and build there an altar and to dwell there.

Thank God for a man or a woman who has the courage and the grace, when brought face to face through sorrow or tragedy with their broken vow, to frankly set about, without making excuse, to rectify the wrongs they have done, and correct the errors. That is exactly what Jacob did, for he called his family together and instructed them, "Take those earrings out of your ears; take those little old gods, those little old idols, down from the mantelpiece and sticking around the house. Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went."

We should be very careful about the vows we make to men and the vows we make to God. Herod made a hasty vow to the daughter of Herodias that resulted in his killing John the Baptist. It will likewise be recalled that Jephthah made a vow to God that resulted in his sacrificing his own daughter to keep that vow. God has a way of testing the sincerity of our vows. He has a way of reminding us of our broken vows. And He expects us to keep our vows. Psalm 76:11 says, "Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God."

Frequently, when we face our vows, it makes it necessary for us to clean up and put out of our lives, out of our homes and out of our families, some things that we have been indulging in, just as it was here when Jacob told his family, "Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments."

Thank God for a family that will respond to the father's appeal. You know, if Dad will lead the way, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, the family will follow.

Dad Jacob led the way. His family brought him their earrings, brought him the little old idols—"And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem" (Gen. 35:4). Down under an oak tree—I guess it was in his backyard—he dug a grave and put them in it and buried them. He tramped down the dirt on that bunch of tomfoolery which had come in between him and God.

Renewed Covenants Bring Renewed Influence

Then Jacob arose and went back to Bethel. The Bible says: "And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob." The power of God was so on Jacob that the nations round about did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.

With this blessing of God upon him, and the protection of God around him, Jacob returned to Bethel. There Jacob went and gathered up the old rocks and stones and built an altar. There he worshipped God. He renewed his covenants. Then God saw fit to use him and his descendants down across all the ages. God has said, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." "Of Jacob!" God was glad to be called "the God of Jacob."

I shall never forget when, as a college kid, I pastored a little country church close to Abilene, Texas. A deacon in that church who ran the big community store had more money than most all of the other folks put together. When a collection was taken, he always made his wealth apparent by how much he gave. Frequently he would say, "Well, I'll tell you; just put up as much as you will and I will match it." He often put in as much as all the rest

of the church put together. But that fellow was wicked and cursed like a sailor. My, my, he was high-strung! A discredit was he to the church, and a disgrace to God.

That was the second church that I ever pastored. I was a country preacher in school, but that old man grieved my heart. I wept over it, but because he had so much money to give, the church tolerated nearly anything on his part. One night I stayed in his home, and I prayed nearly all night, "Lord, here is a man who could mean a lot to You, but instead of meaning a lot to You, he is a disgrace."

The summer meeting came on. Sunday morning we began; then some boys got in the melon patch Sunday night and stole melons. This deacon went out there and threatened to shoot the tough boys, though it wasn't his melon patch at all. There was a big fight at his store over it; so on Monday he had to go to court in the office of the Justice of the Peace. It looked as though that meeting had blown up right there. People came to me to say, "Brother Sam, that's the way it is every summer. Old man Ray gets in the way of every meeting; yet because he goes down there and gives so much money to that little church, they will just let him do anything."

But Monday night we had a house full. I preached on old Simon Peter's cursing. I went right down the middle of that big deacon's back—from his head clear down to his heels. I went after him tooth and nail. My Bible says, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

(Every once in a while a preacher says to me, "My people know how I stand on the liquor question." Great heavens, brother, don't they know how you stand on prayer? Don't they know how you stand on tithing? Don't they know how you stand on baptism? What are you going to preach about if you never preach on anything folks know you stand on. We are to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with longsuffering and doctrine" (II Tim. 4:2). "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). Here is another Scripture: "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (I Tim. 5:20). All this tomfoolery about some old sinning church member and you crawling off in the back of his store and you getting him down on his knees and praying with him and never giving any open rebuke to his ungodly, open sin! My brother, God wants us to rebuke sin openly that others may fear!)

I went after him. I was just a young preacher and I didn't know how it was going to turn out, but I knew God had given me that message. I gave the altar call. He was sitting over in the middle of the church but he didn't even take time to walk down to the aisle. He just started walking right over those seats, coming up! He came right up to me, turned his eyes up to me and said, "Brother Sam, I've cursed and I've sinned."

"You sure have. You are the biggest old rotten sinner in this community. Get down on your knees right here," I said.

Here came another fellow on the other side who was in that racket on Sunday, saying, "Brother Sam, I'm the meanest man in this community."

I said, "That's right, you sure are, and you're a member of this church, too. Get down right by the side of this fellow here."

And there were those two men who had been at each other's throats and ready to kill each other, right down on their knees! I made that altar call, then we got into a prayer meeting. And, we had a prayer meeting that just turned that house inside out.

At the close of that revival we baptized eighty-seven people in that little country church. It reached through all of that community, and for years after that man was one of the best men you ever saw. He never cursed, he lived for God, he magnified Him. Until the day he died he was a shining witness for Christ. Why? Because he came back to Bethel and built the altar again and got where God wanted him, and because God used me to take a stand against his sin in the community, in spite of his wealth.

Brother, what God wants across

America today is a bunch of people to come back to Bethel and build the old altar again, call their families back, get down on their knees and let God have His way, and take our stand against sin and against wickedness and against all manner of worldliness around us.

I trust this Bible conference will mean in your life a renewal of your faith in Christ and a re-dedicating of your life to God. If you are backslidden, come back to Bethel and build the altar where God called you when He first called you out into the work.

Let us bow in prayer.

"Dear Father, we confess our own sins this morning. We confess that we know what the Bible teaches when it tells about getting cold and indifferent and taken up with other things. We confess we need a closer walk with Thee and to come back to Bethel. As best we know how, we do. We pray that Thou wilt look upon us in mercy. We pray that Thou wilt bless these good people. We pray that any cold, indifferent heart may today renew itself in earnest sincerity to Thee. May there be a searching of our hearts and lives for things that might come in between us and Thee, and let us dig a hole and put them in it and bury them under an oak in Shechem and leave them behind, and go to Bethel, where God appeared to us in the fresh fullness of our salvation when we met Him. We pray for anybody here who needs to renew their vows to You. May they do it today, right now, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

—The End—

*Upon the threshold of another year
We stand again.
We know not what of gladness and good cheer,
Of grief or pain
May visit us while journeying to its close.
In this we rest,
God dealeth out in wisdom what He knows
For us is best.*

—Thomas Wearing

and raiment. You've got lots of cattle and lots of sheep. Now come on back. I've got one other thing I've got to do. You know, you have been away from home twenty-one years. And old Esau is still spitting on that whetstone, still sharpening that old barlow for you. I've got to fix that up. Now come on back." The Scripture reads this way:

"And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I. And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled, and grisdled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. I am the God of Beth-el, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred."

Jacob started back. Twenty-one years had not dimmed in his memory the wrong he had done to his brother Esau, nor had they dimmed the memory of that wrong in the mind of Esau. As he got over near the meeting place, he sent a fast rider on ahead to scout out, to see how everything was. That fellow rode on ahead of the flocks and herds and got away on over there; then here he came back. That old horse's sides were lathering—just about run to death. The rider came up to Jacob (you won't find all that in the Bible, but that is what it means, anyway) and excitedly reported, "You know what is happening? Esau is coming with four hundred men. Their spears are glistening in the sun. Their swords are rattling on the side. Boy, they plan to make short work of you; don't you ever doubt that!"

Then fear began to grip the heart of old crafty, scheming Jacob—Jacob means swindler, a tinker, a crafty, scheming fellow. He began to figure how he could work himself out of this jam he had gotten into. "Oh, I know how I'll do that! Leah, take your children and go on first; then you here bring a herd of cattle along after that. Then you there divide

brought him back, and he and his brother met in peace.

Jacob Backslides

Jacob should have gone up to Bethel and dwelt there, and inhabited that country. But Esau wasn't out of sight until Jacob turned and went down to Shechem, a city of Shechem, bought a piece of land and turned his kids out to gallivant around. One of his girls, Dinah, got to running around late at night. Then one night she came in without her virtue.

The next morning the boys noticed that there was a strange quietness around the breakfast table. "What is the matter around here?" one of them inquired.

The mother answered, "Hush, son."

After awhile another asked, "What has happened?"

Jacob said, "Just keep quiet! Just keep quiet!"

Those boys kept prying until they found their sister had lost her virtue to a young prince of the country. This of course aroused the hate and wrath of her two brothers, Simeon and Levi, who, to avenge the ruin of their sister, went on a murdering spree and created such a condition about Jacob among the inhabitants of the land that Jacob, in grief and anguish of soul, said to his sons, "Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land."

How different was Jacob in Padan-aram where God blessed Laban for Jacob's sake, and Jacob in Shechem where he stunk among the inhabitants of the land!

Jacob got away from Bethel, went down to Shechem in Shechem, bought a piece of land when God had given all that to him. He compromised with the world, compromised with the truth, and God let him get into trouble. There he was in trouble up to his ears.

The Call Back to Bethel

Then God appeared to him and said, "Jacob, you don't belong here. You belong up yonder where I called you. Arise, go up to

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